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MAY 5, 2023 | VOLUME 14 | ISSUE 10

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DO YOU LIKE TO
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@groundcovernews, include vendor name and vendor #

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GROUNDCOVER NEWS

CREATING **OPPORTUNITY** AND A **VOICE** FOR LOW-INCOME PEOPLE WHILE TAKING ACTION TO END HOMELESSNESS AND POVERTY.

Groundcover News, a 501(c)(3) organization, was founded in April 2010 as a means to empower low-income persons to make the transitions from homeless to housed, and from jobless to employed.

Vendors purchase each copy of our regular editions of Groundcover News at our office for 50 cents. This money goes towards production costs. Vendors work selling the paper on the street for \$2, keeping all income and tips from each sale.

Street papers like Groundcover News exist in cities all over the United States, as well as in more than 40 other countries, in an effort to raise awareness of the plight of homeless people and combat the increase in poverty. Our paper is a proud member of the International Network of Street Papers.

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ASK YOUR VENDOR

What do you like to do for fun?

Not talking.
— Roberto Caballero, #347

I used to motorcycle and I used to do a lot of different things for fun, but now I'm having fun exploring places and taking pictures.
— Johnny Bean, #599

Me and Joe sit on the front porch and feed the squirrels. Chipmunks too. It's all wild animals with me.
— Teresa Basham, #570

Music, doing my own t-shirt designs, I do a lot of stuff.
— Derek Allen, #177

Have a meal
— Hal Klenk, #88

I'm a boring person, believe it or not. Nothing, I sit at home and drink cold beverages and watch TV.
— Joe Woods, #103

I don't know what fun is. Is there such a thing? The honorable Robert Nesta Marley said, "No chains around my feet but I'm not free. I know I am bounded in captivity. I've never known what happiness is. Where is the love to be found in this concrete jungle?"
— Snap, #205

What would YOU ask?

If you have a question you would like Groundcover vendors to answer in this column, email us at contact@groundcovernews.com

We will be featuring vendor responses in future issues.

Why we need to talk about love

Here is why we need to talk about love. We need it in the world. Love is powerful; just a little act of love makes a big ripple in the world.

Especially with all the hurting going on in the world it's our duty as the human race to beat extinction by spreading love.

Smiling at people is important because it brightens people's day whether you want to believe it or not. Seriously, smile! It's okay — it's a sign of strength not weakness. Smiling at someone shows the love within you.

I'm talking from experience on both ends — receiving and giving.



As a Groundcover vendor, I actually see the act of love in people, even the ones that can't or just don't buy papers from me. What

people don't want to realize is it's not all about material, money or anything we think is tangible.

Just having Love in your heart shows the light shining within you no matter your condition. Period. Love is direct and shown with actions. Giving your time and/or money to show love to people who may not know what love is, is an amazing thing.

In the beginning it may not be easy for most because of how society brainwashed us. There's no color or ethnicity with love. Love sees nothing but what love consists of — being a blessing to people in any way possible.

The egg



A man's only want is the egg
of a good woman
A man's pure sacrifice is the egg
A woman's pure sanity is her egg

A man's
Sacrifice
Is love

A woman's
Sanctity
Is her sacrifice

The band

Of his sacrifice
And her sanctity
Is the bond
To the egg
For a lifetime
Of humanity

A broken egg leads only to
A broken life!

Real love



I'm done fighting,
I'm done trying,
I need that real love,
Not na fake love,
Too old for this shit,
I know this izz it,
I'm so done wit it,
So tired of sighing,
Tired of crying,
All tha time,
All through tha night,
Just need ta keep it real,
Wit tha way I feel.

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Lama Karma visits the Dance for Mother Earth Powwow

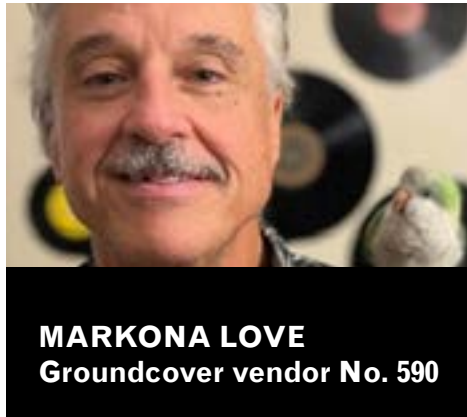
The last weekend in March Lama Karma Drodhul visited from Ann Arbor's Karma Thegsum Cholin (KTC) Center's parent monastery, Karma Triyana Dharmachakra in Tibet. Lama Karma was here teaching a lesson on "Compassion." The following interview was raw — unguided and printed with limited injecture to allow Lama Karma's own words speak for themselves, including broken English. This was an intimate interview at the end of our private breakfast.

So Lama Karma, we went to the powwow yesterday. What were your experiences with that?

"You know, it was really beautiful. I didn't expect how wonderful it was. When I got there, I saw all these indigenous people. They looked like one of my brothers, with long hair and a big build. When we got to the stage, we saw this little kid with long braided hair, running up and down. To me, I saw him as a little Tibetan boy running in the village," said Lama Karma.

"Markona and Ken [Parks] introduced me to everyone at the desk who was very friendly." The Elder in charge shook Lama Karma's hand, thanking him for his support. "The Native American Woman announcer was very busy but she came and greeted me," said Lama Karma.

"We were honored to meet William Shakespeare (Groundcover News writer and vendor No. 258) and Lindsay (Groundcover Publisher) and her boyfriend, Tom, and it was a very nice and touching experience," recalled



MARKONA LOVE
Groundcover vendor No. 590

Lama Karma. Lama Karma and William Shakespeare got along famously.

"So I think sometimes with the newspaper, you know, a lot of people have access to news with technology, but it's so nice to see on [physical] paper. Unfortunately, so many people don't have the opportunity to access [print news]. People need something to hold onto. Some nations began to lose those newspapers, so it's good that those stories can be heard."

"All kinds of people were there, and everyone was supportive, and in the end we don't really care how anyone looks, it's about humanity. And it was such an honor for me. Even though I didn't get to go to some parts because we were obligated to do a practice of compassion at the meditation center."

"I am very fond of the indigenous people where we reside at the monastery in Woodstock. It's a very important place for Native American people. The monastery is situated on a mountain, a particular mountain that's a very sacred place to Native



Lama Karma, Will Shakespeare, Lindsay Calka, Tom McCormick and Ken Parks at the Groundcover booth during the powwow March 26.

Americans. The mountain was shaped like a man on his back with Native headdress. The Monastery was on the Chest of Man [Mountain]. Many years ago indigenous people riding on horseback visited the monastery, because it's a very holy place. I have always had a really close connection with them.

"In Michigan there are many tribes, and I would like them to join us at the monastery and dance with us, and I would be very honored, and we could do some prayer at the gathering. I would pray that they are able to maintain their tradition. Their language and all their traditions, and rights are very precious and I pray that for next year, next visit will coincide with powwow."

Lama Karma was escorted by myself (Markona) and Ken through the display and sales tables. He browsed for an authentic Native American flute to play in Tibet with meditations. I showed him a rainstick. He enjoyed shopping and talking with the Native American merchants and purchased a lockbox. The purchase was a surprise.

Even when going shopping for necessary items, he might not buy anything. He is a man of modest needs. Every three years he gives ALL of his belongings away. I didn't ask, but I believe he purchased that lockbox not just for his wife, but for the benefit of the older merchant selling the box, who then asked for only \$20 instead of \$30 at final purchase.

First things first: we need housing

Instead of continuing to build condos and high-rise apartments for the wealthy, our community should be building affordable housing for low-income and homeless people.

Housing is a right, not a privilege. Then why is homelessness increasing at a high rate throughout the United States? I notice more homeless people in the neighborhood and less resources.

On all American minds right now is the growing inflation. Think about the low-income, houseless people who really feel the pinch. Gas prices went up, food and housing prices are through the roof.

Homelessness is nothing new in America. Decades of failed policies stopped the United States from



MIKE JONES
Groundcover vendor No. 113

building enough affordable housing, experts say. With over half a million homeless, the U.S. poverty rate is at 12.8%: Black people having the highest poverty rate at 19.5%, people of color suffering the most.

Seven million extremely low-income

renters cannot get affordable housing, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition. Finding housing is like playing musical chairs. U.S. homelessness has grown 3% in the last three years, increasing three years in a row, and 60% of the homeless are men.

Don Bosco, in the 19th century, came up with the idea of "Housing First."

What is the housing first philosophy? Housing first is a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness. By having a stable place to live, people can pursue personal goals and turn their attention to improving their quality of life.

This concept inspired Dorothy Day and is the basis of her Catholic Worker



Movement, founded in 1933, and their houses of hospitality.

When a person has permanent housing, food and clothing they have time to make themselves a complete person. Without these three things one cannot become a complete person because they are too busy trying to survive.

Homelessness = Rebirth

MOHAMMED AHMED
Groundcover contributor

"Success is the progressive realization of a worthy goal or ideal"

— Earl Nightingale

As I was standing there on the smoking deck of the Delonis Center, having a cigarette, thinking about the tornadoic downhill spiral that is my life, silent as I continued to delve deeper into my sadness about all that I lost, a beautiful Soul approached me and calmly said to me, "STOP CRYING OVER YOUR PAST LIFE SO THAT YOU CAN ENJOY THE NEW ONE WHICH YOU GET TO WRITE."

We are biological machines functioning on bio-organic matter as fuel, being propelled forward by thoughts interpreted through electricity running through our nervous system. Somewhere in there, there is a mind and a soul and a consciousness and a personality. This amalgamation we call a human being is sitting on top of a round rock (THE EARTH) that is circling around a huge burning ball of nuclear fire (THE SUN). And yet somehow we forget all of this and get hung up on small things like missing a bus, or not achieving a goal or an objective.

Houselessness is somehow making me into a better human, man, husband, father, lover, protector, provider.

I am amazed at the human spirit, because in the midst of the houselessness and despair and hunger and have-not, I was still touched by individuals who had less than me offering me what they have. GOD it feels good to be human.

The things I have gained from houselessness are immense, but the most profound has been ridding myself of judgmentalism — of basing my opinion on people solely on my physical perception of their physical attributes or their attire. This happened in the most awesome of ways, as I was sitting there sipping a coffee in Starbucks, looking out of the window at the snow, wishing I could go outside and make a snow angel.

A young Caucasian gentleman walked into the cafe; from his appearance and attire I automatically judged him to be a drug addict. We exchanged glances and I mean-mugged him hard; he left and went outside. As I continued gazing at the snow, I saw the same individual I had just judged to be a vagrant drug addict shoveling the snow off of the

sidewalk out of the goodness of his heart so that those using the sidewalk wouldn't slip or fall. He did not care that they had homes or better lives than him, and even though he was struggling and homeless, he still wanted to help and be of value to society and humanity. This simple act of kindness on his part made me shrug with shame at having judged a fellow human being, and that sense of shame made me not want to ever again judge another human being based on my own perceptions of reality.

To be honest, I grew up in a dysfunctional home. As an immigrant American, raised in a different country, different culture and different ethics, it has been extremely difficult to manage assimilation and understand who I am. For what it's worth, I am just happy to be a human experiencing humanism.

"A Mind is a terrible thing to waste" — I did not care for that phrase until I experienced houselessness. After having to deal with houselessness and seeing how my mind reacted to ensure my survival, man, I am amazed.

Without houselessness I would never have quit drugs. Being on the streets and having been assaulted while intoxicated has led me to value my sobriety and my consequent situational awareness and situational alertness.

Losing out on so many opportunities due to simply being too stoned on indica edibles made me angry. I kept getting angry with myself for letting financial and life improvement opportunities just pass me by. Now I am no longer seeking mind-altering substances, but I will vouch for the therapeutic and medicinal and mood-enhancing and reflective effects of microdosing psilocybin mushrooms. While I won't be missing any hard drugs, I am no longer so attached or dependent on marijuana. It was a crutch that served me well, and then negated my potential. I am:

- valuing my family — seeking to be a better man, a better father, working hard and diligently and honestly to provide a better set of circumstances that will ensure that my children have a much better and more organized life than mine and what I have endured.
- valuing hard work and cooperation, valuing people for who they are, seeing the good potential and the ability to do good even in those who have hurt me or caused me misfortune —doing God's work on earth and making sure the devil

fails:

- being thankful, being appreciative, being forgiving, leaving the door of mercy and forgiveness open to those who recognize their faults and are seeking to apologize and reconnect;

- realizing my current value, and addressing the need to add skills to add value to my life;

- realizing that I have lost nothing, because the life that I have now is what was meant for me and it is awesome.

We humans are all awesome, the more we seek to differentiate ourselves from each other, the more we come to realize that we have so much in common.

It is not us who determines the sweet variety of humanity, it is mother earth that does. The geography of our physical locality, its trees, fruits, flowers, and fauna determines the cultures and traditions we have, the cuisine, the music.

It is why nations such as India, China and most Asian and African countries have vibrant, colorful tangible traditions and culture — because of the songs of the birds and the bees and the smells and so forth. The temples, the art works, the engravings, the museums, the history are because mother nature there provided a variety. It is for the same reason that the Arab Bedouin in the desert has a more intangible culture, and is more inclined towards immaterial intangible emotions such as brotherhood, respect, honor, poetry and storytelling. It is because his habitat is based on the sea, sun and sands of the desert. We humans are good at adapting, that is why we are the "primus inter pares non" species on this planet.

Houselessness has allowed me to forget who I am, and rediscover who I want to be: Respecting myself for all that I have accomplished in the face of all the circumstances that I have faced. While I know that there are tougher individuals out here in the world than me, who have faced and defeated greater demons, that still does not take away from my story and battle. Having been through tough times, I know now how to prepare for them, and how to take them on:

- Loving myself for who I am, and appreciating my story and its uniqueness;
- Loving my fellow humans, understanding that we are all the same, we feel hunger, pain, yearn for love and laughter and acceptance,

see **REBIRTH** page 11 ➡



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May 21: 1-4pm



Why DTE faces no consequences for lengthy, widespread power outages

People from around the state met with Michigan Representatives and Senators in Lansing on April 27 to discuss campaign finance reform as part of the SHOW MI THE MONEY Lobby Day. There was near unanimous agreement from the 70 offices visited that dark — or secret — money is a problem that is out of control. (Secret money is generally money that is originally donated to an organization and then makes its way to a Super PAC which can raise and spend unlimited amounts of money on issue advertising, with the original donors being anonymous. Although these ads can't explicitly say to vote for or against a candidate, they can influence the way voters perceive candidates or ballot proposals.)

The amount of money spent in campaigns, especially the amount coming from PACS was also deemed problematic. One example of the outsized power of PAC money mentioned by legislators is that DTE could not be called to account for the lengthy and widespread power outages a couple of months ago because they control enough campaign money to torpedo the re-election of any legislator from a



SUSAN BECKETT
Publisher emeritus

competitive district who voted for penalties.

Representative Carrie Rheingans (representing part of Ann Arbor and western Washtenaw County and southern Jackson County) said that she did not take money from DTE and Consumers Energy. She said the caucus did receive money from power companies that was spent on some races whose campaigns had refused such funds.

Jason Morgan, another Ann Arbor/Washtenaw Representative, said it is hard for some members to stand up against powerful interests in favor of constituents' interests because of the special interest Super PAC threats to

topple incumbents in closely divided districts. He added, "Unchecked power is unacceptable - across the board. They may agree with me today and disagree tomorrow."

Other frequently mentioned legislator concerns were so-called issue ads that are really smear campaigns with no discernable or responsible person behind them. Senator Ruth Johnson, the former Secretary of State, offered this hypothetical example: "Tell Representative Joe Shmo to stop torturing puppies." That advertisement could be credited to and funded by a Super PAC with a name like Michiganders for Decency, but the names of the people, companies and organizations donating to Michiganders for Decency are likely untraceable. The sole donor could be the parent of Joe Shmo's opponent; if the donation was originally made to another non-profit and then funneled from there to Michiganders for Decency, it would be mingled with other funds and not readily identifiable.

Representative Denise Mentzer (Macomb County) said she hates having to make phone calls asking for

checks. She is among those who would like to see public financing of elections. She thinks that with limited money to spend, candidates would focus their promotions on themselves and there would be considerably fewer attack ads.

Corruption was another legislator concern. Most have Political Action Committees (PACs) to help them cover expenses, since they no longer have government resources to do so. Most use the PAC funds to cover job-related expenses such as tickets to community fundraisers and transportation costs to and from Lansing and around the district. Party leaders and the chairs of powerful committees often have PACs with vast amounts of money that they use to help with election campaigns for themselves and select other members of their party.

As recent scandals illustrate, they sometimes also use them for inappropriate purchases, such as luxury automobiles and family vacations. Legislators were also frustrated that even on the rare occasions when

see **POWER** next page ➔



"Team Elephant" meeting with Michigan Representative Wendzel and Jacob Rushlow in Lansing on April 27 to discuss campaign finance reform as part of the SHOW MI THE MONEY Lobby Day.

➔ **POWER** from last page

serious infractions do come to light, consequences are rarely more than a token fine. It is a system that breeds a culture of corruption.

Many legislators fear that that culture of corruption and the coercion of moneyed interests, especially the Super PAC bundlers (who move money from a variety of sources into the Super PACs and collect a 10% fee for doing so), will stymie the progress of transparency laws this session as has happened in previous sessions.

Representative Mark Tisdell (Rochester) mentioned that he ran in 2020 for an open seat, which made it a target. Both candidates' campaigns spent \$1 million. He was sworn in in January and had his first major fundraiser in March. "It's a distraction from governing," he said. He also noted that good fundraising and campaigning skills do not necessarily translate into good governance. He asserted that the legislature needs to enact campaign finance reform "but there's a way around everything. They put in a PAC cap and leadership sets up multiple PACs. Sunlight and transparency are good things. On the other hand, attacks on donors are also a problem."

Representative Pauline Wendzel (W. Michigan) wants to eliminate secret money but has security concerns for donors who give to socially-charged issues. She stated that all Super PACs, including unions, should have donation limits, and also called for simplifying the rules around campaign financing.

These are issues likely to be raised when the House Ethics and Elections Committee holds hearings on campaign finance reform later this year.

Dianne Schwartz, one of the citizen advocates and a former East Lansing City Council member observed, "The money in politics is like sand from a huge, massive cloud. You lock your doors but it still finds its way in ... and you've got to regularly sweep in out." She called on the Democrat majority to make this a priority.

Some of the citizens who came out

to speak about campaign finance reform were shocked to learn that the measures in Proposal One, passed by voters last year, applied only to lawmakers' personal asset disclosures, not those of their PAC and other accounts.

A broad coalition of groups organized the SHOW MI THE MONEY Lobby Day. Quentin Turner of Common Cause of Michigan started off the lunchtime press conference by calling on the legislature to:

- Pass a budget that includes sufficient funding to increase implementation of existing transparency regulations and voter protections;
- Pass a resolution of support for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that overturns the Citizens United decision so that Congress and the states may set reasonable campaign contribution limits and distinguish corporations from people; and
- Implement clear and concise disclosure rules for election-related financial contributions.

Sandra Sorini Elser, representing the Michigan chapter of the League of Women Voters, echoed those calls and added that Michigan is 48th out of the 50 states in anti-corruption measures.

Hank Mayers, president of Michiganders for Fair and Transparent Elections, remarked on the geometric growth of the money spent on elections and the disproportionate increase in secret money. He stated that the money transfers from non-profits and foundations amounts to money laundering, which is illegal in every context but politics.

To halt the secret money, Mayers plan calls for explicit separation of funds for electioneering and disclosure of the five largest donors to the election accounts, regardless of what kind of organization it is. He also insisted we need "a guard dog with teeth" that has investigatory powers and more serious consequences for individuals who violate campaign finance regulations.

Former House Democratic Leader Christine Greig related an example from her time in the legislature.

Lobbyists provided paid vacations in Hawaii for 20 lawmakers to "educate" them about a bill on the brink of introduction that had already failed multiple times in previous sessions. The direct sponsor of the trip was a non-profit. The legislators could not be identified and did not have to disclose the gift. If someone had not tipped off the media about the trip, Greig questioned whether we would ever have known about it.

Prop 1 of 2022 is a good start. But underlying state laws for defining who can give gifts are flawed. Even under the Prop 1 disclosure requirements, those travelers to Hawaii would still not need to disclose the travel expenses because they were furnished by the non-profit.

Former Ann Arbor City Council member Elizabeth Nelson shared her experiences with campaign financing. She raised \$10,000 to run in 2018. She was targeted by secret money but managed to win anyway. She experienced a big change in 2020 when the cost of running for local offices tripled and quadrupled, depending on the ward. Ann Arbor City Council elections in 2020 and 2022 were flooded

with over \$30,000 in PAC money.

Nelson raised \$20,000 with no fundraisers and felt good about that. However, she was outspent 2-1 by her opponent whose campaign funds included \$12,500 from sources outside the city. Nelson said that in Ann Arbor, a network of individuals max out their personal contribution limits, then have their spouse and other family members do the same. She knows of some who have collectively contributed over \$20,000.

"It happens where you live, and it matters. Because somebody like me who is just committed to public service and is thinking about it ... the answer to how [to go about that] is not that that you'll need about \$10,000; in the City of Ann Arbor it is you'll need about \$40,000 ... that is huge barrier to entry and a huge obstacle to our democracy."

Other participating organizations included American Promise, Declaration for American Democracy, the League of Women Voters of Michigan, Michigan Voices, Public Citizen, Represent US, Reclaim Our American Democracy, and the People.

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Sirenia the artist

It was 2 a.m. and the party was finally ending. Robert was driving home. He was thinking about his promotion, having just become a partner at the most prestigious law firm in Denver, Colorado. However, he could not forget how he was going home with no one to congratulate him.

Opening the door at his condo, he looked around and thought, “I am tired of being a selfish bachelor. It’s time for me to purchase a home and find a wife.” He promised himself that he would take more time to date and find his future wife. He undressed and showered, going to bed excited about going hiking the next morning.

Even though it was the weekend, Robert did not sleep in, out hiking by 11 a.m. However, he did not meet anyone before or during his hike. “What a day,” he thought. “No beautiful single lady was waiting to meet her beau.”

When he returned home he decided he would not bring any woman to his bachelor pad, so he immediately started searching for a home. He made an appointment for the following weekend to view four houses. It took a while, but after seven months of searching he finally found a gem of a house.

One Sunday morning Robert was at the grocery store and while in the commodities aisle, he helped a woman who could not reach the top shelf. He introduced himself hoping she was single. Rebeca was single, a petite brunette with a bright warm smile and personality. Robert quickly asked her if she was involved in a relationship. She smiled and answered that she was not dating anyone at the time. He then asked her would she be interested in going to the movies and out to dinner? Rebeca took out a pen from her purse, grabbed his hand and wrote her number in his hand. Robert laughed saying, “Okay, I will call you this evening and we can discuss where you want to go?”

They parted ways. On the way home, Robert was feeling warm inside and excited. Returning home, he realized he did not have any furniture — no way she could see his house in this condition. After work the next day he stopped at Madison’s Furniture, an expensive store. He was admiring a leather sectional for his entertainment room while looking for living room furniture. A voice said, “Quite unique, don’t you think?” The lady was referring to the picture that hung above the sectional. He turned around to see who was talking to him. She was a beautiful woman with a mysterious, cute look about herself. Robert was drawn to her green eyes and red hair.



FELICIA WILBERT
Groundcover vendor No. 234

“How are you?” he asked.
“Oh, my. I did not mean to distract you, it’s just a pretty picture, I was talking aloud.”
“Well, do you work here?” Robert asked.
“Oh, no, I was just shopping for inspiration.”
“What does that mean?” Robert asked.
“I am an artist just looking for new colors and ideas. By the way, my name is Sirenia.”

Robert introduced himself, then asked, “Can you paint me a picture for my entertainment room?”
Sirenia replied, “Yes, why not? What are you looking for?”
Robert said, something unique and different. He then asked if they could exchange numbers and said that he would be calling her on the weekend. He purchased the sectional. It was perfect.

Once he got free that evening he called Rebeca. She answered the phone with a soft voice and they talked until it was his bedtime. Rebeca liked to hike and camp; they had several things in common.

That weekend he called Sirenia and invited her over to see the house and the furniture he had purchased. When she arrived, Robert gave her a tour of his house. Sirenia was impressed and inspired, eager to paint the picture for his entertainment room. She decided to stay for dinner to learn more about Robert’s desires. Sirenia promised his picture would be complete within two weeks.

She was to paint the picture and he was a single, handsome man looking for a wife. Sirenia was thinking about how she had to go to her small condo, always waiting for her big break as an artist.

That weekend Robert took Rebeca out to dinner and a movie. He enjoyed talking with her and how pleasant she was. The two weeks before the picture was done seemed forever to Robert. He wanted to impress Rebeca with it.

Sirenia finally called on a Saturday morning inviting him to come to her studio to pick up his picture. Robert

arrived early, eager for the reveal. Sirenia had several pictures that caught his eye, so he selected two of them. She was pointing to a large picture draped with a tarp.

“Remove it already,” said Robert.
It was an odd picture of a swirling flat pool of water with a city scene in the background. Robert loved the oddness and the colors. “What a picture!” he complimented her. He then purchased it and the other two paintings. Sirenia was pleased and waited for him to ask her out. However, he could not stop talking about wanting to show the picture to Rebeca.

When he left, Sirenia was fuming, wondering why he did not ask her out. She decided she was going to marry him no matter what! The next day she broke into his house and retrieved Rebeca’s phone number from his home phone. She returned home and cast a spell on a picture she painted of Robert talking on the phone. Sirenia dialed Rebeca’s number, put the phone on the picture and spoke to it. The picture sounded just like Robert; she invited Rebeca over for lunch, claiming to be in between cases. Rebeca accepted the invitation for lunch the following day. She arrived and she noticed that she did not see Robert’s car.

Sirenia was waiting for her, explaining she was his new maid. She stated that he would arrive soon, and he had said to come in and wait for him. Rebeca entered the house. The picture was now hanging in the foyer. Rebeca walked over to the picture, admiring it, reaching her hand out saying what a spectacular painting. All of a sudden the swirl of water moved and sucked Rebeca into it. Sirenia laughed while returning the picture to the entertainment room. She then gathered up her items and drove off, abandoning her car in the woods.

Robert returned from work excited to call Rebeca over to see his new paintings. He did not get an answer. He left her several messages and continued to call and text her. He wondered why she did not return his calls or texts. It had been three weeks.

Sirenia called and inquired about the paintings, asking if he needed any future paintings. Robert returned her call, unaware of her powers. Once he heard her voice, he forgot about Rebeca and thought he was dating

Sirenia. He said to her, “Don’t be late for our dinner date tonight.”


Sirenia quickly pounced upon him, and during dinner he asked her to marry him. Even though he did not have a ring, she accepted. During lunch the next day, Robert was at the jewelers selecting a ring for Sirenia. They were wed within one month and she had moved in. He thought he loved her, but it was because of the spell she cast.

One year passed and he was asking for children. Sirenia knew she was barren and a witch, but she promised him soon they would start a family. Robert thought he was happy, still hiking and working.

One weekend she decided it was time she rid herself of him — after all she only wanted the house and money. She cast a spell on the same picture that sucked Rebeca up. Sirenia complained that the house was dusty and she wanted to wipe everything down. Robert’s happy, helpful self got a step ladder and approached the picture to dust it down. He reached over the top and disappeared into the picture. That night she waited until it was late, then she held the picture over his car and the car disappeared. Sirenia laughed; she waited 48 hours and reported him missing.

The police came over to investigate her claim of him not returning home. During the investigation they found no foul play and could not find him or his auto. As time passed, Sirenia dated seven men whose wealth she stole and then they disappeared into a painting.

The insurance investigator Mr. Tucker left Robert’s case dormant for nine years. During the tenth year, three months before the policy would pay, he decided to take a final look. Sirenia was annoyed with him and decided it was time for him to disappear. She was painting a picture of a policeman arresting a strange looking lady. Just as she was chanting over it, the detective walked up on her, never knocking at the door. She was startled, jumping while she turned to see who was in the room with her. Sirenia stumbled, reaching out to catch her balance and was sucked into the picture. Mr. Tucker was speechless and shocked, wondering what just happened right before his eyes.



Thank you Truth Or Lies readers you voted right, "Benny the Bully Easter Bunny," published April 7, was based on a TRUE story. Names were changed to protect the privacy of the families

Sudoku

★★★★☆ 4puz.com

9	2				1			4
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			5				1	
5		8					7	3
	3						4	
2	4					8		5
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	9	3		2		5		
7			9				3	1

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover is a non-profit, and paper vendors are self-employed contractors, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following is our **Vendor Code of Conduct**, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

- Groundcover will be distributed for a voluntary donation. I agree not to ask for more than the cover price or solicit donations by any other means.
- When selling Groundcover, I will always have the current biweekly issue of Groundcover available for customer purchase.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper or selling past monthly issues.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers and refrain from wearing it or other Groundcover gear when engaged in other activities.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover Staff and will not sell to or buy papers from other

Groundcover vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff, and other vendors respectfully. I will not “hard sell,” threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor in downtown areas. I will also abide by the Vendor Corner Policy.
- I understand that Groundcover strives to be a paper that covers topics of homelessness and poverty while providing sources of income for the homeless. I will try to help in this effort and spread the word.

If you would like to report a violation of the Vendor Code please email contact@groundcovernews.com or fill out the contact form on our website.

WORD SEARCH: ANIMALS!

S	A	C	A	U	D	A	L	J	O	I	N	T	E	D
P	M	U	N	I	V	A	L	V	E	J	R	E	Z	Q
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J	I	A	E	E	A	S	A	B	A	R	P	P	N	V
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R	Z	Y	Q	F	R	K	D	Y	P	E	D	A	T	E

WORD BANK:

Acaudal	Canine	Posterior
Alular	Carangid	Scaled
Ametabolic	Caudated	Scaley
Anguine	Colonial	Scaly
Annelidan	Filariid	Spidery
Anserine	Jointed	Univalve
Araneidal	Mantle	Vagile
Avian	Oviparous	Viviparous
Batrachian	Pallium	
Bivalved	Pedate	

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MAY 2023 EVENTS AT BETHLEHEM

Please visit the church website at: bethlehem-ucc.org for the most up-to-date calendar and event information.



Sunday Worship Time
10:00 am In-person
and via Live Stream and Radio Broadcast

A plea to the Biden administration: STOP the Willow Project

On Monday, March 12, 2023, President Joe Biden approved a large oil drilling bill which will ultimately produce poison, destroying the environment and permanently damaging the climate of our planet (over a quarter of a billion metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions). The Willow Project bill approved the drilling of 68,000 acres of Alaskan land. The Willow drill plan is deemed controversial due to not only its projected detrimental effects on the environment, but also by the ethical injustices the wildlife living in the area would face.

Many Biden supporters feel betrayed as he has strayed from his anti-drilling on federal lands stance that he touted during his 2020 campaign. In fact, the Biden administration is defending the former Trump administration by green-lighting the project. This decision was exactly what many were voting against. In the current age of climate protests, environmental activism, global warming and a push for sustainable energy, it is maddening to see yet another plan approved that will



LILA HARRIS
U-M student contributor

further destroy the place we call home. The space that is keeping us alive.

The plan is to drill on the ConocoPhillips petroleum reserve, which happens to be close to the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area, in Alaska. Drilling oil for the Willow Project will release thousands of millions of metric tons of pure carbon emissions into the atmosphere, and would completely destroy the surrounding area of the reserve and the Teshekpuk Lake Special Area. The area is an essential home for wetland species, as well as a habitat for caribou and other wildlife that Native



Conoco-Phillips drill site in the Western Arctic. Photo credit: EarthJustice

communities rely on.

According to the Alaska Wilderness League, the Arctic climate of the area is essential for the breeding of important and endangered species, including caribou, waterfowl, loons, eiders, shorebirds, polar bears, wolves, musk ox, brown bears, foxes and more. The Willow Project would require “a new oil and gas processing facility, massive satellite drill pads with up to fifty wells on each pad, a spider web of roads, a new airstrip, pipelines, and two gravel mines within a protected river setback.” What does this mean? Displacement, if not death, for many vulnerable species, and complete destruction of these areas.

How can it be considered morally or ethically justifiable to destroy the habitats of endangered wildlife? It cannot be justified. The Willow Project capitalizes on the beautiful environment that we humans live in and completely take advantage of. What do we want our future to look like? What can we do to fight against the Willow Project? Protest! Sign a petition; you can find it at Change.org “Stop The Willow Project.” Visit stopwillow.org to learn how you can be a part of the fight to conserve and protect the Western Arctic. Retweet, repost and spread #StopWillow.

Write to your senator or representative. Make your voice heard. Stop The Willow Project.

GEO 3550 strikes through U-M graduation

On March 24 I was attending my morning English class as usual when we were interrupted with a rambunctious cacophony of noise in the third floor corridor of Mason Hall. Moments later and with an enthusiastic flourish a woman burst through the door, speaker in hand loudly playing rock music and shouted, “This is a strike! Come join us in the Diag, GET UP LET’S GO!”

We could hear her echoed calls for protest trail and fade as she continued down the hall. Echoed in every class on the floor shouting the same message, beckoning others to join the movement. Her rebellious cries lingered in the air till the class ended.

Why are they striking? As we are probably all brutally aware, the cost of living in Ann Arbor continues to skyrocket. The cost of living is moving at an alarming rate that monthly income is unable to adequately support, leaving many struggling to make ends meet. The graduate students have had enough of constantly reaching out to the University beckoning them to at least pay them a living Ann Arbor wage.

So, the girl who busted into our class on that gloomy Wednesday morning was a member of the Graduate Employees’ Organization (GEO), a labor union of Graduate Student Instructors and Graduate Student Staff Assistants. Together, these individuals are responsible for a large amount of teaching and grading work the University of Michigan. As of that very Wednesday at 10:24 a.m. GEO has been on strike, withholding their labor to pressure the University to take them seriously. Strikes are the embodiment of democracy, a means to stand up to employers and fight for better working conditions.

Since the beginning of their triennial contract negotiations last Fall, GEO has been asking U-M’s HR to offer its members a livable wage. This would mean a 60% raise for all GSIs and GSSAs. The university’s highest offer,



MIA BARR
U-M student contributor

however, has remained below inflation, effectively translating into a pay cut for its Graduate employees.

The escalating costs of living lead individuals to purge more of their income on rent and leave little for anything else, such as food and other basic necessities. GEO is shining a spotlight on the growing wage disparities in Ann Arbor and the inability for not only GSIs and GSSAs, but all Ann Arborites, to live with dignity in this town and its surrounding areas.

What else is on the table in GEO’s bargaining platform? Beyond the most prevalent issue of wage, GEO is also fighting for programs that will benefit the entire Ann Arbor community, such as a non-police emergency response force. In April of 2021 the Ann Arbor City Council approved the formation of an Unarmed Public Safety Response Program that could be used for mental health crises, conflicts, public assistance and more. I had a chance to speak with Rianna Johnson-Levy a GSI at the University on this program and here is some of what she had to share on the topic.

“Having grown up a block over from Aura Rosser, who was killed by the AAPD in 2014 after they were called to respond to a domestic altercation, I know how police presence can escalate to violence in moments of crisis in peoples’ lives. I believe supporting non-armed crisis response on our campus will help to protect me as a worker and provide a benefit to black and brown people and people with

disabilities who spend their days on our campus.”

This program is already strongly supported by organizations across the University and Ann Arbor community and is meant to provide a resource for issues that can be solved without violence, with the goal of de-escalating situations.

Back to the living wage. Is that really so much to ask for? The University of Michigan has a \$17.4 billion dollar endowment and is set to make an excess of \$91 million this fiscal school year alone according to research done by the Michigan Daily. Out-of-state students with no financial assistance pay more for one semester at the University of Michigan than GSIs and GSSAs make in a year. It would cost the University \$30 million (only 1/3 of this year’s excess) to pay all GSIs and GSSAs a living wage.

Nonetheless, the strike continues with no end in the foreseeable future. In fact, after speaking with a professor who is close to the subject matter, it appears that the University is pressuring faculty to try and keep things as normal as possible to keep donors happy: demanding that tenured faculty, who all have their own obligations, to grade hundreds of papers while maintaining their research with the University. A near impossible task if I have ever heard one. As the strike is nearing a month in length and the semester comes to an end, many students are unhappy with how the University has responded. This is now the longest strike in University history, topping the historic 2020 GEO strike that prevented U-M returning to in-person classes during the COVID pandemic.

Strike update: Many GSIs and GSSAs will enter the month of May unable to pay rent, as U-M has withheld payment for all striking Graduate student employees.

GEO’s strike has received international attention and gathered support across the country, as expressed in

various letters by U-M faculty, as well as fundraisers for GEO’s strike fund, from, for example, University of California Santa Cruz.

Many tenured faculty and lecturers have pledged to withhold grades in solidarity with GEO. The administration is threatening to give undergraduates illegitimate grades in response, undermining instructors’ autonomy and further revealing how U-M prioritizes its own image and money over its mission of education, and its supposed commitment to equity and diversity.

You can follow the latest news about the strike on GEO’s social media and their website: www.geo3550.org



GEO members and supporters on Mayard Street in downtown Ann Arbor marching to the courthouse on the morning of U-M’s injunction hearing.

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150% Federal Poverty Chart

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REBIRTH from page 5

while dealing with the circumstances of the world;

- Appreciating laughter and joy and pain. You got to laugh at yourself sometimes — if you don't you might end up hurting yourself;
- Loving the simple things in life — the rays of the sun in the morning, being up at 5:30 a.m. in the gym, taking a nice shower after a hard day's work, having a hard day's work;

- Learning to be more stoic, focusing on what matters in life, letting the small things go, not getting bothered or frustrated;
- Lending a helping hand — that is the best feeling in the world, I love it when people ask me for help. GOD is in assistance of those humans who seek to help and serve their fellow man;
- Respecting pregnant women, women, the elderly, opening doors for people, walking down the stairs in

front of pregnant women so that they feel comfortable, guiding, assisting, serving, helping, the smile on a fellow human when he has reached his purpose and goal is amazing, it's fulfilling, it's beautiful, it's contagious, it's courageous. It makes you feel like a billionaire while not having a single penny in your pocket.

I don't understand how houselessness is somehow making me into a refined gentleman. But it has been one hell of a journey.

Organization is sophistication, early preparation leads to improved determination, which enhances the imagination and leads to beautiful creations.

Hey, whatever you're going through just remember, life is not that bad, and the code to the bathroom at Starbucks on State Street is 35724.

Mohammed Al Mustapha (Pen Name — Boomer the Nile Crocodile aka Nubian Prince).

Spring pea salad

REE DRUMMOND
The Pioneer Woman

Ingredients:

1/3 c. sour cream
1 tbsp. mayonnaise
Salt and pepper
1 tbsp. white vinegar
4 c. frozen green peas, almost totally thawed
8 slices bacon, cooked until crisp and chopped
1/2 small red onion, halved and sliced very thin
6 oz. cheddar or American cheese, cut into small cubes
3 tbsp. minced fresh parsley



Directions:

Mix the sour cream, mayonnaise, salt, pepper and vinegar together to make the dressing. Add more salt and pepper to taste.

Stir 2/3 of the dressing into the peas until the peas are coated. Gently stir in the bacon, onion, cheese and parsley until all combined. Taste and adjust

seasonings.

Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate 2 to 4 hours before serving. (Pop the extra dressing in the fridge, too.)

Remove from the fridge and stir in the rest of the dressing to your liking. Sprinkle with more parsley before serving.

Perfect for a Mother's Day celebration!

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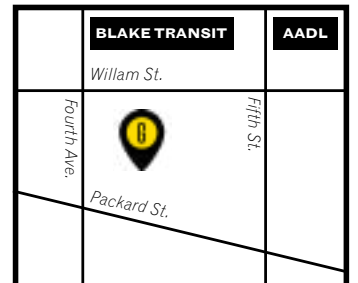
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The Groundcover office is located in the basement of Bethlehem United Church of Christ (423 S 4th Ave, downtown Ann Arbor)

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P	A	L	L	I	U	M	E	E	Q	G	S	S	L	D
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